

Life History of Joyce Wicklund

By: Kara Moore, MOTS & Kasey Nieland, MOTS

Introduction

- The purpose of this study was to explore the evolution of occupational therapy through the life history of selected participants.
- Joyce was one of 29 participants for this life history study which is part of a larger project, *Life Histories of Individuals Who Have Been Influential in Developing Occupational Therapy (OT) in North Dakota and Wyoming*.
- The KAWA model helped guide the interview process as we explored Joyce's life history because this model examines the turning points of one's life.

Description of the Participant

- Joyce was originally interested in psychology but she came to know about OT through a television advertisement called "Careers in Mental Health" where she requested a booklet about OT. Since then, she has been passionate about the profession.
- Joyce graduated with a Bachelors of OT from University of Kansas in 1970. She also began her career at this time, working in a physical disability setting.
- Joyce had the intention of switching to the psychosocial setting as the years went on, however, she ended up staying in the physical disabilities setting because she felt like she was using her knowledge and her training.
- Joyce has worked in nearly every setting of OT, including physical disabilities, psychosocial, pediatrics, and traveling OT.
- From 1995-1996, she taught first and second year occupational therapy assistant students at Montana State University College of Technology.
- Joyce has been retired since 2010 and has since gotten married and started volunteering at Choice Fitness with individuals who have Parkinson's Disease in Grand Forks.

Methodology

- A qualitative study was conducted, specifically utilizing a life history approach.
- There were no specific gatekeeper issues while collaborating with the participant.
- Informed consent was obtained prior to the interview and was approved by University of North Dakota (UND) Institutional Review Board (IRB) and formal IRB process was waived.
- Participants were assigned from a list developed by the instructors of the course through purposive sampling.
- Students arranged a meeting time with the participant and conducted 1 one-hour semi-structured interview.
- Interview questions were provided by the course instructors and questions were added and modified by the students following the Kawa Model.
- The interview was conducted at the UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences in room 310.
- The interview was transcribed verbatim and the data was collapsed into codes. The codes were categorized into themes and the themes were comprised into one assertion and one sub-assertion specific to Joyce's history.

Literature Review

- Literature supports the importance of continuing education for occupational therapists in remaining competent and providing evidence based practice for interventions to their clients (Vachon, Durand, & LeBlanc, 2009).
- Additionally, Alsop and Lloyd (2002) asserted that continuing education should be a part of the wider vision of the profession so that OT practitioners may provide the highest quality health care. This idea was supported by Roberts (2002).
- According to Moyers & Metzler (2014), collaboration among an interdisciplinary team is critical in providing the best quality of care to not only the patients but their family/caregivers as well.

Data Analysis and Findings

- The interview was recorded on an iPad, transcribed, and initially coded with 26 codes that reflected the main points that were discussed throughout the interview.
- The OT student researchers further developed the codes into categories with themes and patterns by finding commonalities between the codes.
- The OT student researchers kept reflexive journals throughout the course of the data analysis process, as a way to increase trustworthiness. Additionally, Joyce provided pictures to the researchers and two people engaged in the coding process.
- The researchers consulted with their course instructor/advisor to receive feedback regarding the data analysis.
- Categories and Themes**
 - Maintaining Competence**
 - Participating in continuing education builds expertise.
 - Becoming specialized in one's area of practice is critical.
 - Changing Demands of OT**
 - The profession's knowledge base is growing and OT practitioners are less dependent on the direction of physicians.
 - Inter-professional collaboration is crucial to provide best-quality service to clients.
 - Ethical and Personal Challenges**
 - There are ethical and personal challenges where one has to choose between meeting productivity standards or providing the level of quality care the patients deserve.
 - Practitioners must have a plan of action on how to deal with these challenges.

Discussion

- Final assertion:** For Joyce, inter-professional collaboration, continuing education, and specializations are growing increasingly important to maintain competence as a practitioner.
- Sub-assertion :** Making difficult ethical and personal decisions was an inevitable aspect of Joyce's career as an occupational therapist.
- Joyce described other things of importance throughout the interview. She spoke of the importance of spirituality and viewing people as three constituents parts – the mind, the body, and the soul. Joyce is passionate about people and it is evident that she is driven to view clients holistically to provide the best possible care.
- Joyce used the interview as an opportunity to encourage the OT student researchers to capitalize on learning experiences and utilize new knowledge to expand the profession.
- Joyce's gentle, altruistic spirit has indubitably left an invaluable impact on the clients she has treated and she has left a mark on the profession that cannot be erased.

References

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Recovering from injuries sustained in a fall at the Baukol-Noonan shop at Center, N. D., Fred Dissell keeps up to date on the company's lignite mining operations and reclamation work being done on resulting spoil banks. Dissell is mine superintendent for Baukol-Noonan. Shown at the Rehabilitation Center at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, Dissell checks out some grain grown on reclaimed spoil bank land. Holding the grain shocks is Matt Edman, properties supervisor for Minnkota. On the right is Joyce Wicklund, with the occupational therapy department at the Rehab.

"We're here to make a difference in some way and every person has to find out: how am I here to make a difference?" -Joyce Wicklund